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Remarks

This is in response to the non-final Office Action mailed May 31, 2006, which rejected claims 1-2, objected to claims 3-10, withdrew from further consideration claims 11-18, and allowed claims 25-27.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to now generally feature an "*over-mold portion comprising at least one rigid structural component comprising a first polymer and a concurrently formed elastomeric component comprising a distinct second polymer.*"

Support for this amendment includes allowed claim 25. Withdrawn method claims 11-18 have been cancelled without prejudice. The title of the specification has been amended to better conform to the claimed subject matter.

These amendments are proper, do not introduce new matter, and serve to place the application in proper condition for reconsideration and allowance.

Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,698,733 to Larmande ("Larmande '733"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Larmande '733 at least fails to disclose an "*over-mold portion comprising at least one rigid structural component comprising a first polymer and a concurrently formed elastomeric component comprising a distinct second polymer.*" as featured by claim 1.

Regardless whether claim 1 includes method limitations as asserted by the Examiner, claim 1 is clearly structurally distinct over the structure disclosed by Larmande '733. See MPEP 2113; *In re Thorpe*, 777 F.2d 695 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *Bonito Boats, Inc. v. Thunder Craft Boats, Inc.*, 489 U.S. 141 (1989).

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Moreover, there is nothing that would motivate one skilled in the art to arrive at the subject matter of claim 1 in view of Larmande '733.

Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 and 2 are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowability of claims 3-10 and the allowance of claims 25-27.

Conclusion

This is intended to be a complete response to the non-final Office Action mailed May 31, 2006. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 and 2 are respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise concerning this response, the Examiner is invited to contact the below signed attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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